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RHMFISS/NAS SIGONELLA IT IMMEDIATE
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 2931
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RHMFISS/COMUSNAVEUR NAPLES IT IMMEDIATE
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 9321
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2979
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 3127

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 000398

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2/29/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: GLOBAL HAWK: ITALY APPROVES BASING AT SIGONELLA:
RECOMMEND THANKING ITALY AT BUCHAREST NATO SUMMIT

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Anna Borg for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (U) This message contains an urgent action request at para 2.

[1](#)2. (C) The Italian Defense General Staff (IDGS) notified the Embassy in writing on April 1 that Italy approved the deployment of the Global Hawk UAV to Sigonella Naval Air Station in Sicily (text of approval note at para 4). The IDGS requested that we not/not announce the approval publicly until after the upcoming Italian elections on April 13-14. ACTION REQUEST: We recommend that the U.S. Delegation to the NATO Summit at the highest level possible privately thank the Italian Government at Bucharest for this decision.

[1](#)3. (C) Global Hawk will replace the U2 in 2010 as our primary overhead reconnaissance asset in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and North Africa. Securing basing for Global Hawk at Sigonella has been a top priority for Embassy Rome for the last year and a half, including via the Ambassador's personal engagement of the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Minister of Defense, Chief of Defense and National Security Advisor. The approval is testament to the continuing strength of the U.S.-Italy security relationship.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Informal Embassy Translation of the notice of approval:

"NATO RESTRICTED

Defense General Staff
Division III -- Office of International Relations

Rome, 1 April 2008

SUBJECT: Deployment of a U.S. RQ-4 "Global Hawk" Unit at the Sigonella Base (Province of Catania, Sicily)

To: U.S. Embassy, Office of Defense Cooperation

Reference: Letter from the U.S. Embassy Office of Defence Cooperation dated 10 January 2007.

[1](#)1. With regard to the request made in the aforementioned

letter, it is communicated that the Ministry of Defense has expressed its favorable opinion regarding the permanent deployment of a U.S. UAV RQ-4 "Global Hawk" Unit at the Sigonella Base.

12. The deployment should take place according to the modalities and time frame laid out by the Italian Air Force General Staff, in the context of the technical activities currently underway in cooperation with the Office of Defense Cooperation.

Signed,
Major General Pasquale Preziosa
Chief, Division III

NATO RESTRICTED"

End text of approval note.

Note: IDGS marked this notification "Restricted," which is the same as NATO Restricted, and should be treated by the State Department as SBU. IDGS specified that this marking was used because they do not want to have the U.S. make public release until after Italian elections on 13-14 April 2008; thereafter it is Unclassified. End Note.

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